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A TOUR OF INDONESIAN NAVY INSTALLATIONS IN SURABAYA

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A TOUR OF INDONESIAN NAVY INSTALLATIONS IN SURABAYA

/Following is the translation of an article by A. M. Hardy in Pedoman Mingau (The Guide), Djakarta, 6 November 1960, pages 1-2, and 13 November 1960, page 2/

Notwithstanding the speedy progress observed during a week's visit to the Indonesian Navy installations in Surabaya and Malang, we still hear complaints about the lack of sufficient naval equipment which is vital for the development of a strong Indonesian Navy.

The shortcomings are not confined to material supply there is also lack of instructors. Lieutenant Colonel Jono Parto, director of the Naval Establishment in Surabaya says, for instance, that the insufficiency of material equipment necessary for eventual war purposes is due to the lack of basic industries. Consequently, we will always be dependent on foreign countries and on foreign exchange needed to import this equipment. He further asserts that such imports are only possible as long as we are in the possession of enough foreign exchange. Furthermore, the imports of equipment from foreign countries must be compatible with our neutral and active policy. Accordingly, the various imported materials from these countries might create new problems and necessitate a readjustment of our present personnel and existing equipment.

Also, Lieutenant Colonel F. Suak, commander of the AAL (Naval Academy), remarks that up to now the AAL has not yet reached its degree of desired perfection and that during the nine years of its development obstacles and difficulties are due to the above fact. The basic trouble of the academy is the lack of buildings for the complete absorption of the students and consequently only a certain number of students can be admitted each year. Besides, the AAL still lacks permanent instructors. For the time being the AAL tries to solve this problem by engaging several teachers from the University of Padjaran, the University of GAMA and the University of Erlangga. Those troubles, however, do not have any influence on the quality of our graduated and they are not inferior in comparison with the graduates of foreign naval academies.

Another complaint has been put forward by Major Kusaniwato, the PPKKO (Education Center of the Corps Commando) commander. He says that vital problems have always been experienced in building up the AL in general and instructing the KKO in particular. The nature of these problems are similar to those of the AAL, PAL, etc; viz. the lack of

material equipment, personnel, and finance. This will form an obstacle for the development of a strong navy, necessary for maintaining the stability of our country; especially when we consider the geographical structure of our country; it consists of thousands of islands surrounded by oceans.

Considering the facts above, people are inclined to think that the development of their Navy is far behind that of the other armed forces. However, our observations have proven that this is not the case. Up to now the ALRI is in possession of a reasonable number of ships, besides other modern war equipment. Further, it has its own armaments works with considerable machinery. We hope that the ALRI will be more self-supporting in the near future. This will make us less dependent upon foreign countries and eliminate the eventual problems arising in case of a blockade or other obstacles. We are sure that the Admiralty in particular, or the Government in general, has already considered thoroughly the crucial problem of the supply of naval equipment. The choice lies between importing armament from foreign countries or having our own armaments works and basic industries as starting points for other factories.

Major Sardjono, head of the Central Naval Information Service, is of the opinion that the upbuilding of the ALRI has already become a part of the overall development program of the Depernas (National planning Board). We hope, he says, that when this program becomes a reality, the ALRI will make more progress in creating a strong Indonesia at sea, as well as on land and in the air. Also in the education field for naval officers, attempts of our Navy become evident in the renovation of its personnel. Every year the Naval Academy as the center of education for future ALRI officers delivers young graduates who are ready for their tasks at sea. However, several obstacles are still to be faced in the future development of the AAL. Among other things, e.g. the lack of the buildings still limits the admittance of a large number of students. This year, for instance, only 160 students are admitted, whereas there have been about 3,000 candidates. The Academy has accordingly decided to make an accurate selection among the candidates. This concerns their ability, good will and knowledge obtained at the SMA (High School) or the STM (Technical High School) education. The AAL commander, F. Suak, maintains, however, that the lists of grades cannot be taken as a basic criterion for the selection of the candidates. In most cases those grades do not give an exact reflection of the person's ability and good will. For instance, there are candidates with excellent grades who nevertheless have failed in their entrance examinations, or do not have the required physical strength.

The Naval Academy formerly required three years' of study for a cadet. This has now been changed into a four-year course in order to increase or ensure the quality of the graduates. At present the AAL already has five education departments which are quite different from one another.

In this complex three important departments are essential for the AAL student. For instance, in the English Department every cadet is trained in using his knowledge of English and their work can easily be

controlled. Here direct supervision of the instructors means an important stimulating factor for the students in doing their work. In addition, we also find a service station, complete with ship engines used by the ALRI. Before every cadet goes into service on the various types of ships, he gets some practical knowledge in those service stations in operating the various types of engines.

Another not less important department is the Naval Artillery School (SARTAL). As the name indicates, this is a place where the cadets get their naval artillery practice, which is slightly different from the land artillery. In naval artillery the influence of the ship movements on the firing power also has to be taken into consideration. Every student gets training in firing, using radar instruments, and so on.

At the end of our tour to the navy installations in the AAL complex, Lieutenant Colonel F. Suak explains that at the present stage the AAL is not lagging far behind in comparison with naval training in other countries, and that "we are now even ready to accept foreign cadets who want to study at our AAL". He further states that even after nine years have elapsed, the original schedule of turning out 200 cadets per annum, has not yet been realized. This is partly ascribable to the students themselves. Every year 30% of the students fail to finish their training.

Our observations during the tour of the ALRI base in Surabaya indicated that "Jalesveva jajamahe" (Celebes or Amboina dialect, translation unknown), which several years ago was still a motto has apparently become a reality now. This is confirmed by Major Kusnaniwoto, commander of the Education Center for the Corps Commando (PPKKO) in Gubeng, who mentions that a strong armada, submarines, air force and army are needed for the defense of this wide and scattered country.

The education center of the PPKKO is located in Gubeng Surabaya, which is also meant for a training camp of all members of the Navy. Our fellow correspondents, whoever "enjoyed" some training at this PPKKO, admit that the training was rather hard in the beginning. But after one or two weeks "we get used to that and gladly follow the instructions".

We also get the information from the PPKKO commander that the ALRI was very satisfied with the results of the training of the Wamilda (correspondent). As to the Commando Corps itself, Major Kusnaniwoto stresses the very great importance of their education and training, considering their heavy task in breaking through the coastal defense of the enemy. It stands to reason therefore, that very tough military training is necessary besides the physical and mental requirements.

The commander of the ALRI armaments works also tells us something about the experiments of producing armaments in the attempt to bring some improvement to the ALRI. "We have to do this" the commander says, while showing us an instrument which they just finished; it is an instrument for measuring the velocity of a bullet. In response to our question, the commander says that the existing foreign exchange shortage does not enable the Navy to import such equipment from abroad. "An order had even been placed, but it has not yet arrived up to now. In anticipating the arrival of this equipment, we succeeded in producing it ourselves."

From our observations at this armaments works of the ALRI, we can say that besides our personnel who are trained in foreign countries, our own STM people from the chemical and machine sections will also form a vital factor in running the works. "And of course we need people who will voluntarily and seriously do the job". Taking into consideration the importance and need of experts in the development process of our country and the Army, our Government in general and the Department of Education in particular should consider this urgent need of increasing the number of engineering schools, like STM, SPMA, etc., besides the SMA.

At the end of our visit to this works, we returned to the main subject of our discussion; the development of the country without neglecting the important role of the armed forces. For this purpose basic industries are badly needed.

During our visit to Morokrembangan, Major Hamami Hidajat, commander of this naval air base, in his statement expressed the urgent need of a larger airfield for expansion purpose in the very near future. "Fortunately this will be realized when the Waru airport is finished". The Morokrembangan air base does not meet the requirements any longer. Therefore, it will be closed as soon as the Waru air base is completed. Major Hamami further says that it has always been the ALRI's cherished wish to expand its air fleet, which is at present only partly realized by the possession of certain types of planes, such as the Gannet and the Gruman Albatros. Concerning the Gannet, Hamami explains that this type of plane is of great use for a country like ours (surrounded by sea), because the Gannet turns out to be very effective in hunting and destroying submarine. In order to meet the requirements of an expanding ALRI air fleet, construction was recently started on the new Waru air base, 20 kilometers from Surabaya. This will be fully equipped, including housing for the airport attendants, which will make the landing of various types of aeroplanes possible in the years to come. The construction of this air base is done by a French contractor (CITE) and is expected to be completed in 1964.

A quite different picture than the previous observations of our tour in Surabaya was obtained from our visit to the Naval Academy in Malang. The KALM (Naval Academy) has a function quite different from what we have observed in Surabaya and other places. Major Mangunkarta, the KALM commander who took us around the complex said that the KALM has three functions for the Navy. First it serves as a registration center for the Navy candidates to be examined. Secondly, as a training center for those who are not directly involved with fighting, such as cooks, shoemakers, barbers, and so on. Thirdly, as a retreat for those who are off duty, where they can get vitamin-enriched food at moderate prices. As to the first function of the KALM, Major Mangunkarta explains that the KALM is a recruiting center, where the candidates also undergo physical and psychological tests, under the supervision of Major Usman Rachmani. About the second function, as a training center the KALM prepares personnel to serve as ship crews.

Major Mangunkarta remarked further that every candidate who has ever joined the KALM in Malang can tell about the rules over there. Everybody has to take care of his own personal belongings and is not allowed to have them scattered, even in his own room. It happened once that some correspondents who were there for a test, "lost" their things. Afterwards, it turned out that the janitor had taken care of those things. He advised the correspondents "if you leave the room, please gather your things, otherwise they will be taken away". This reveals something about the KALM in Malang, which principally serves as a recruiting and training center of the Navy.

Before the tour to all those Navy installations, Colonel Muljadi, commander of the Kodamar IV in Surabaya, said in an interview: "Indeed, the public does not know much about the development of the Navy, and I do hope that it will be more interested in it after reading the report of this tour, and that more of our youth will join the ALRI. Also, I do hope that in the future the government will pay more attention to the existing deficiencies and shortcomings of the ALRI, which forms a part of the country's defense." Major Abdul Fatah, head of the Information Service of the Kodamar IV in Surabaya, also expressed his fervent hope that in the near future the Navy will be able to make more rapid progress than before.

Captions to photographs on page 1 of Pedoman Minggu, 6 November, not reproduced here.

Left: This picture shows machines from various imported types of ships, which are used for the ALRI's students before going into practice at sea.

Right: A place where the ALRI cadets are instructed and trained in using the various types of armaments, used in the Navy Artillery School.

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